

C.I.A. Super-Government?

The case of the Singapore bribe attempt raises serious questions about the Central Intelligence Agency and its role in American foreign policy.

Initially, the State Department flatly denied Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew's disclosure that in 1960 the C.I.A. had offered him a bribe to cover up an agent's unsuccessful effort to penetrate Singapore's intelligence service. Only after Mr. Lee released a 1961 letter of apology from Secretary Rusk—and threatened to put incriminating tape recordings on Radio Singapore—did the State Department's embarrassed spokesman confirm the incident.

The spokesman explained that the State Department officials responsible for the initial denial were not fully aware of "the background" of the incident. And the C.I.A., as The Times diplomatic correspondent Max Frankel reported yesterday, "apparently relayed the denial of wrongdoing that it customarily issues to the rest of the Government when confronted by such charges."

All this is dismally reminiscent of the false State Department denials in the 1960 U-2 case that broke up the Paris summit conference with Russia. After the Bay of Pigs disaster, President Kennedy ordered new procedures established to assure that the State Department would be adequately informed of C.I.A. activities so that it could exercise policy supervision. The Killian watchdog committee, originally appointed by President Eisenhower, was revived, given a far more vigorous role and, in 1963, placed under the chairmanship of former White House adviser Clark Clifford.

Apparently some or all these safeguards have now broken down. What is most disturbing is not the certain damage done in Singapore, but the possibility of more serious delinquencies. The country can no longer be sure that either the State Department or the White House is exercising the requisite supervision over an agency about which the public knows almost nothing at all.

The Clifford committee evidently is already looking into the case. A Congressional investigation is also in order. Congressional supervision of the nation's intelligence activities is obviously inadequate. A joint committee, similar to that which watches over atomic energy, has been urged by many members of Congress; it is badly needed.

Serious damage has been done to American relations with many governments by C.I.A. activities in the past, particularly in Asia. In Jakarta last Spring, President Sukarno and many members of his Cabinet were reading a new American book, "The Invisible Government," and using its confirmation of C.I.A. intervention in the 1958 Sumatra uprising to justify their hostility to the West and increasing friendship with Communist China. Similar hostility exists in

nation of the majestic Hudson is one result of the absence of such cooperation. We can no longer afford to permit the continuing deterioration of so splendid a natural resource.

Beating the Minimums

It is startling to learn that inspectors of the Federal Wage-Hour Division have turned up more than \$5 million dollars in illegally low wage payments to workers in the metropolitan area in the last year. The New York-New Jersey region ranks among the highest in the nation in labor standards and in percentage of union organization; yet victimization of Negroes, Puerto Ricans and other underpaid workers apparently remains widespread. For every dollar of chiseling the Government discovers, many more undoubtedly go undetected because workers are too frightened to report their bosses' crime or too ignorant of their legal rights. Congress is currently considering a proposal to extend the Federal law's floor under wages and ceiling over hours to 7.2 million workers still outside its coverage. Among the excluded are farm laborers, the most exploited of all American wage-earners. The need for wider protection and more stringent enforcement is highlighted by the disclosure of how many evasions now occur in this metropolitan district.

Fight on V.D.

The American Medical Association's decision to mount a national drive against venereal diseases is a necessary response to a fast-worsening situation. Public Health Service statistics show that newly reported cases of both syphilis and gonorrhea have been rising for almost a decade. The magnitude of the problem is suggested by the estimate that over a million Americans are infected with venereal disease each year. Its urgency for the future is underlined by the fact that infectious syphilis is most prevalent among teen-agers and young adults.

Prudery and reticence are still major obstacles to checking V.D. Both syphilis and gonorrhea are curable through the use of penicillin and other antibiotics. They are eradicable if all those carrying the diseases receive adequate and timely treatment. The military services long ago created an efficient system of prophylaxis to protect soldiers, sailors and airmen.

The more basic problem of morality is a more difficult—and perhaps insoluble—one. We live in a go-go civilization in which too many look upon restraint and continence as "square." Young people and adults alike are assailed from many sides by sexual stimulants deliberately employed for commercial purposes. Homosexuality—a very substantial source of venereal infection—is now flaunted more openly and praised more publicly than in earlier decades. The rising tide of V.D. is one of the consequences of these trends, even though medical research has made it needless if available resources are fully used.

We need factual, unbiased treatment of the story of discrimination against the woman worker in man's world of work.

Why are women generally in the lowest paid jobs? How many jobs are designated "men's jobs" merely because they are higher-paying rather than because women cannot perform them? How many jobs are "women's jobs" merely because they are menial, routine, monotonous and, of course, low-paying? Is bias against women in executive and administrative jobs based on fact or fancy? Are women excluded from certain jobs by force of tradition, whim, or misinformation rather than for real differences in the capacity to perform a job?

Occupational Qualifications

These matters were discussed at the conference. The Times saw only the funny bunny.

Actually the "bunny problem" is no problem at all. The law expressly recognizes that certain jobs may require a "bona fide occupational qualification" based on sex. The Times may rest assured: men will be men and women will be women, and the law does not even remotely suggest a "neuterization." Nor does it prohibit advertising for a wife—if that should be the way of romance.

So let us have our fun out of the sex angle—if we must. But let us also treat the plight of the woman worker with the seriousness it deserves from a great newspaper.

ESTHER PERSSON
Assistant Secretary of Labor
Washington, Aug. 26, 1965

Greek Crisis

To the Editor:

In your Aug. 30 editorial "Dead End in Greece" you say that "Ex-Premier Papandreu started a fire when King Constantine as good as dismissed him. . . ."

I would put it that the "fire" was started by those who advised the King to get rid of Papandreu, bringing the monarchy in opposition to over 85 per cent of the electorate, as was evidenced in the last general elections.

Whenever a political crisis of this kind arises—whenever the relation of the people's will to those who collectively express it is cast in doubt—there is only one solution: elections.

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